

Additions to 'The Use of Tifgreen and Tifdwarf Bermuda Grasses in Two Singapore Golf Courses'

WONG Yew Kwan*

89 Soo Chow Garden Road, Singapore 2057

Further to my recent publication of the report (Wong, 1986) on the performance of the two tifgrasses, Tifgreen and Tifdwarf, in the golf courses at the Tanah Merah Country Club (TMCC) and the Sentosa Golf Club (SGC), I was fortunate to have the opportunity of revisiting the Jagorawi Golf and Country Club near Bogor, Indonesia, on 7 January 1987. My first visit was six years ago when the first 9 holes were just ready for play. At the time the tees were covered with pure Santa Ana grass while the fairways and greens were respectively turfed with Tifgreen and Tifdwarf. It was already noticed that broad-bladed local grasses such as *Axonopus compressus* (Cow Grass) and *Paspalum conjugatum* were beginning to invade the fairways and workers were seen busy weeding these out. The resident superintendent at the time, however, assured me that with minimum weeding the turf could be kept pure. This has turned out to be otherwise.

As Jagorawi was our source of the grasses for TMCC and SGC, I made it a point to look very closely at the turf as we played along so as to establish a visual comparison between the situation in Singapore and that at Jagorawi *vis-a-vis* the fate of the introduced grasses. Jagorawi, just like TMCC and SGC, used Santa Ana for the tees, Tifgreen for the fairways and Tifdwarf for the greens, and just like our two courses in Singapore the intention was to keep the turf as pure cultures. After having seen the whole course during the round of golf, I have to say that the present situation at Jagorawi is very similar to that at TMCC and SGC — except for the greens, the Tifgreen in the fairways and the Santa Ana on the tees have almost been totally replaced by other grasses and sedges.

The whole range of species of the grasses and sedges occurring in TMCC and SGC could be found in Jagorawi but the density patterns are very different in the two places. In TMCC and SGC there are more of the coarser species, such as *Brachiaria distachya*, *Axonopus compressus*, and *Cyperus radians* whereas in Jagorawi, species with finer habits have come into dominance. These are the Serangoon Grass, *Digitaria didactyla*, a species of *Eragrostis* and patches of *Polytrias amaura*. The rather fine sedge, *Cyperus kyllingia*, is also common but not as dominant as in the two courses in Singapore. With the finer grasses dominating the scene, the Jagorawi course has a much more uniform look than our two courses.

Cyperus radians, the coarse sedge with a tufted rosette habit, found so commonly in the two courses in Singapore, is hardly seen at Jagorawi. This may be due to the better drainage of the volcanic soil in the latter place. It may be recalled that this sedge comes into prominence when there is locally impeded drainage. That this should happen on a course constructed with a sand overburden on clayey fills, such as is done in Singapore, may seem surprising. Sand is supposed to be rather free draining. Unfortunately the sand overburden that was laid is not deep enough in certain spots, and since the underlying clay is rather impervious, water tends to be retained at the distinct interface, particularly if the topography is flat at the spots in

*Mr. Wong is a founder member of TMCC and was at various times serving on its management committee and the Sentosa Golf Board.

question. This would cause local ponding during wet spells or when the place is over watered. Volcanic soil on the other hand is well known for its better structure and this accounts for better drainage and hence the absence of this hydrophilic sedge.

Reference

Wong, Yew Kwan (1986). The Use of Tifgreen and Tifdwarf Bermuda Grasses in Two Singapore Golf Courses. *Gard. Bull. Sing.* 39: 203-214.